

TOP SECRET(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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October 20, 1966

THE NRO STAFF

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, DIA
Director, NSA
Director of Reconnaissance, CIA
Director of Special Projects, SAF
Director of Naval Intelligence
Director, NPIC
Chairman, COMOR
Commander, Global Weather Central

SUBJECT: Ad Hoc Group re Satellite Operations Center (SOC)

The on-going and programmed introduction in the NRP of new and more capable photographic and SIGINT satellite systems, coupled with the increasing scope and sophistication of national intelligence needs, has made it patently clear that the NRO Satellite Operations Center also must significantly improve its capabilities--particularly, in the rapid processing and analyzing of sizable amounts of data.

As you know, the principal functions of the SOC include the establishment of satellite launch schedules, the selection of orbits, and the selection of specific on-orbit payload objectives (i.e., targeting) in response to USIB requirements. In this NRP role, the SOC has and will continue to have varying degrees of support requirements, both during and between missions, with each of the above addressees.

Over the past several months, we have studied the SOC functions, responsibilities, procedures, and performance in considerable detail, and explored various alternative means of improving its capabilities. However, before any final plans can be made, we must first be assured that the necessary SOC support interfaces are compatible with your current and future capabilities and that these support interfaces will be conducted effectively. It is in this particular regard that we seek your advice and assistance with regard to the SOC. Additionally, since it is obvious that several functions now

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NRO review(s) completed.

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COPY 3 OF 3
PAGE 1 OF 2

TOP SECRET

25X1

performed manually in the SOC must be automated, we desire to take advantage of your considerable experience in automatic data processing.

Early in November, I plan to convene an Ad Hoc Group under Colonel Henry C. Howard, Chief of the SOC, for the purpose of defining or confirming interfaces and mutual support responsibilities between the SOC and your organization, and request your appraisal on such matters as formats and scope of information flow applicable to your organization, equipment for the SOC activity, future planning of your organization which might impact on the SOC, etc. It is requested that you designate a representative to participate in the group who is [redacted] cleared for satellite projects and knowledgeable of the current support interfaces.

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Colonel Howard will contact your representative later this month and establish a date and place for the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Group. The initial session will be devoted mostly to discussing the results of our analyses to date and outlining the task desired of the group. Undoubtedly, several sessions will be required for a thorough appraisal of the subject; however, every effort will be made to minimize the time and effort required on the part of your representative.

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[redacted]
James T. Stewart
Major General, USAF
Director, NRO Staff

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